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More from the Falls.

CATARACT HOUSE, NIAGARA, JULY 13, 1857.

DEAR DWIGHT:

Still a charmed guest at this Court, where, crowned with everlasting green, more radiant than the freshest, wet, sunlit June leaf—the sublimest and most versatile of water spirits holds his seductive, magnificent eternal revel, I write again, partly to assure you that I have not "gone over" to my beautiful enemy.

The understanding plumbs the scales; and we maintain that mental equilibrium, which chastens the imagination, measures the distance of its flight, and reports its discoveries; enables us to plant a safe chamois foot on the edge of overhanging cliffs, and there affront with steady gaze the bewildering eye of the enchanter.

Man is an overmatch for any waterfall; and a rising and widening mind not only holds him, but finds, besides, a snug corner and hospitable room for scenes and events of human interest.

We found, in the language of the pencil, an unexpected high light of patriotism here upon the Fourth, "focused up" against the political shadow of Canada. Cannon, crackers, bells, pyrotechny in the fields, and bonfires in the streets; rival fire-engines sending upward jets in slender mockery of the waterfall; an Indian foot race, in gala costume; and the natives of the neighboring Indian village disseminated over their ancestral and original domain.

On Sunday we made a pilgrim's progress towards Tuscarora, past the suspension bridge, past the whirlpool, happily past the Devil's Hole, on to the little Indian chapel of the Lord, set on a hill.

We pale faces numbered a quarter of the

congregation. The instrumental music, one big fiddle, was monopolized by a native, in whose eye glittered the fiery spirit of his race, while his nose seemed newly coppered by a spirit equally ardent, and I fear more invincible. The choir was composed entirely of base voices, led by Kantshine, whose right eye was in a patch, which he vainly endeavored to conceal by a long lock of hair sweeping down from the forehead.

What shall be said to these dusky children of the Great Spirit? What a beautiful problem it would be to harmonize the grand voices of nature, the roar of the forest and of the waterfall, vibrating as these must be upon the innermost chords of their being—with a verse from the Sermon on the Mount, or some other passage from those

" Sinless years
That breathed beneath the Syrian blue,"

and so strike a light of hope into their hearts that would shine and warm forever!

Instead of this, the white preacher offered them the husks of the Geneva creed, and his words were translated and uttered after him in the hard and guttural Indian tongue, by a native who stood by his side in the pulpit. I turned towards a lively papoose that stood near on its mother's knees, in its Indian cradle—a flat board bound with gay stuffs—and winked and chuckled at a string of beads slung on a hoop around its head. Catching the kind and merry eyes of Elve, the beads were neglected for a time. Kantshine re-adjusted his hirsute disguise. I fear there is a comedy going on in church. God willed it otherwise. He who in a thousand homes is filling the eyes of childhood with that ineffable tenderness and truth, which, more than all the ministrations of nature leads the heart directly up to Him; and who, with an equally impartial love removes that light from other homes, took care of that day.

A child's coffin was brought in, and laid silently on a table beneath the pulpit. The preacher spoke unheard. Papoose was forgotten. Kantshine went into total eclipse. Fun vanished from the face of Elve. A summer cloud came over the heaven of her eyes, then wept itself away, and left them

" Homes of silent prayer,"

as they met those of the bereft young Indian mother.

In Indian eyes is often seen the expression of an unlimited and remediless sorrow, as if out of their shadowy depths looked the soul of the eternal past. In hers was added the perplexed and eager look of one seeking to define an object in the distant darkness.

The spirit of Christ entered the little chapel,

and wrought a miracle in the preacher, who bolted directly from his Calvinistic logic, and began to argue with superfluous elaboration the necessary salvation of every dying child, since the foundation of the world.

The meeting broke up. I recalled Kantshine glimmering in the corner, and was sharpening his characteristics for pictorial memory, when I missed Elve among a crowd of native women. She appeared directly; and, as we rode away, and I put my handkerchief into her ungloved and gentle hand, I came to know that both the mother and the live papoose, and the mother of the child in heaven, would surely hold their white blue-eyed sister in singular and affectionate remembrance.

Hold thou me thus, dear friend, for I am, as ever,

MOT.

Thomas Carlyle on the Opera.

[From the Dumfries Album.]

Music is well said to be the speech of angels; in fact, nothing among the utterances allowed to man is felt to be so divine. It brings us near to the Infinite; we look for a moment across the cloudy elements into the eternal Sea of Light when song leads and inspires us. Serious nations—all nations that can still listen to the mandates of nature—have prized song and music as the highest; as a vehicle for worship, for prophecy, and for whatsoever in them was divine. Their singer was admitted to the council of the universe, friend of the gods, and choicest benefactor to man. Reader, it was actually so in Greek, in Roman, in Moslem, Christian, most of all in old Hebrew times; and if you look how it is now, you will find a change that should astonish you. Good heavens! from a psalm of Asaph to a seat at the London opera in the Haymarket—what a road have men travelled? The waste that is made in music is probably among the saddest of all our squanderings of God's gifts. Music has, for a long time past, been avowedly mad, divorced from sense and fact; and runs about now as an open Bedlamite, for a good many generations back, bragging that she has nothing to do with sense and fact, but with fiction and delirium only; and stares with unaffected amazement, not able to suppress an elegant burst of witty laughter, at my suggesting the old fact to her. Fact nevertheless it is; forgotten, and fallen ridiculous as it may be. *Tyrtæus*, who had a little music, did not sing "Barbers of Seville," but the need of beating back one's country's enemies—a most true song, to which the hearts of men did burst into responsive fiery melody, followed by fiery strokes before long. Sophocles also sang, and showed in grand dramatic rhythm and melody, not a fable but a fact—the best he could interpret it—the judgment of Eternal Deity upon the erring sons of men. *Æschylus*, Sophocles, all noble poets, were priests as well; and sang the truest, (which was also the divinest), they had been privileged to discover here below.

To "sing the praise of God;" that you will find, if you can interpret old words, and see what

new things they mean, was always, and will always be, the business of the singer. He who forsakes that business, and, wasting our divinest gifts, sings the praise of chaos, what shall we say of him? David, King of Judea, a soul inspired by divine music, and much other heroism, was wont to pour himself in song; he with seer's eye and heart discerned the godlike amid the human, struck tones that were an echo of the sphere harmonies, and are still felt to be such. Reader, art thou one of a thousand able still to read a Psalm of David and catch some echo out of it through the old dim centuries, feeling far off, in thy own heart, what it once was to other hearts made as thine? To sing it attempt not, for it is impossible in this late time; only know that it was once sung.

Then go to the opera, and hear, with unspeakable reflections, what men now sing! Of the Haymarket Opera my account, in fine, is this. Lustres, candelabras, painting, gilding, at discretion; a hall as of the Caliph Alraschid, or him that commanded the slaves of the lamp—a hall as if fitted up by the genii, regardless of expense. Upholstery and the outlay of human capital could do no more. Artists, too, as they are called, have been got together from the ends of the world, regardless likewise of expense, to do dancing and singing, some of them even geniuses in their craft. One singer in particular, called Coletti, or some such name, seemed to me, by the cast of his face, by the tones of his voice, by his general bearing, so far as I could read it, to be a man of deep and ardent sensibilities, of delicate intuitions, great sympathies, originally an almost poetic soul, or man of genius as we term it; stamped by nature as capable of far other work than squalling here like a blind Samson to make the Philistines sport. Nay, all of them had aptitudes, perhaps of a distinguished kind, and must, by their own and other people's labor, have got a training equal or superior in toilsomeness, earnest assiduity, and patient travail, to what breeds men to the most arduous trades. I speak not of kings, grandees, or the like show figures; but few soldiers, judges, men of letters, can have had such pains taken with them. The very ballet girls, with their muslin saucers round them, were perhaps little short of miraculous, whirling and spinning there in strange, mad vortexes, and then suddenly fixing themselves motionless, each upon her left or right great toe, with the other leg stretched out at an angle of ninety degrees, as if you had suddenly pricked into the floor, by one of their points, a pair, or rather a multitudinous cohort of mad, restlessly jumping, and clipping scissors, and so bidden them rest, with opened blades, and stand still, in the Devil's name! A truly notable motion—marvellous, almost miraculous, were not the people there so used to it; motion peculiar to the opera; perhaps the ugliest, and surely one of the most difficult ever taught a female in this world. Nature abhors it; but art does at least admit it to border on the impossible. One little Cerito, or Taglioni the Second, that night when I was there, went bounding from the floor as if she had been made of India-rubber, or filled with hydrogen gas, and inclined by positive levity to bolt through the ceiling; perhaps neither Semiramis nor Catharine II. had bred herself so carefully.

Such talent, and such martyrdom of training, gathered from the four winds, was now here to do its feat and be paid for it—regardless of expense, indeed. The purse of Fortunatus seemed to have opened itself, and the divine art of musical sound and rhythmic motion was welcomed with an explosion of all the magnificences which the other arts, fine and coarse, could achieve. For you to think of some Rossini or Bellini in the rear of it, too; to say nothing of the Stanfields, and hosts of scene-painters, machinists, engineers, and enterprisers; fit to have taken Gibraltar, written the history of England, or reduced Ireland into industrial regiments, had they so set their minds to it. Alas! and of all these notable or noticeable human talents, and excellent perseverances, and energies, backed by mountains of wealth, and led by the divine art of music and rhythm, vouchsafed by heaven to

them and us, what was to be the issue here this evening? An hour's amusement, not amusing either, but wearisome and dreary, to a high-dizened select populace of male and female persons, who seemed to me not much worth amusing. Could any one have pealed into their hearts once, one true thought and glimpse of self-vision: high-dizened, most expensive persons, aristocracy so called, or best of the world, beware, beware what proofs you are giving here of betterness and bestness. And then the salutary pang of conscience in reply. "A select populace, with money in its purse, and drilled a little by the posture maker; good Heavens! if that were what, here and everywhere in God's creation, I am. And a world all dying because I am, and show myself to be, and to have long been, even that? John, the carriage—the carriage, swift! Let me go home in silence, to reflection, perhaps to sackcloth and ashes!" This, and not amusement, would have profited these persons. Amusement, at any rate, they did not get from Euterpe and Melpomene. These two muses, sent for regardless of expense, I could see, were but the vehicle of a kind of service, which I judged to be Paphian rather. Young beauties of both sexes used their opera-glasses, you could notice, not entirely for looking at the stage. And it must be owned, the light in this explosion of all the upholsteries, and the human fine arts and coarse, was magical, and made your fair one an Armida, if you liked her better so. Nay, certain old improper females (of quality) in their rouge and jewels, even these looked like some reminiscence of enchantment, and I saw this and the other lean domestic dandy, with icy smile on his old worn face, this and the other Marquis Singedelomme, Prince Mahogany, or the like foreign dignitary, tripping into the boxes of said females, grinning there awhile, with dyed moustaches, and Macassar oil graciosity, and then tripping out again; and, in fact, I perceived that Coletti and Cerito, and the Bhythinic arts, were a mere accompaniment here. Wonderful to see, and sad, if you had eyes. Do but think of it. Cleopatra threw pearls into her drink, in mere waste, which was reckoned foolish of her. But here had the modern aristocracy of men brought the divinest of its arts, heavenly music itself, and piling all the upholsteries and ingenuities that other human art could do, had lighted them into a bonfire to illuminate an hour's flirtation of Singedelomme, Mahogany, and these improper persons.

Never in nature had I seen such waste before. Oh! Coletti, you whose inborn melody, once of kindred as I judged to "the melodies eternal," might have valiantly weeded out this and the other false thing from the ways of men, and made a bit of God's creation more melodious—they have purchased you away from that, chained you to the wheel of Prince Mahogany's chariot, and here you make sport for a Macassar Singedelomme, and his improper females, past the prime of life. Wretched spiritual nigger, oh! if you had some genius, and were not a mere born nigger, with appetite for pumpkin, should you have endured such a lot? I lament for you beyond all other expenses. Other expenses are light; you are the Cleopatra's pearl that should not have been flung into Mahogany's claret cup. And Rossini, too, and Mozart, and Bellini, O Heavens! when I think that Music, too, is condemned to be mad, and to burn himself to this end, on such a funeral pile, your celestial opera-house grows dark and infernal to me. Behind its glitter stalks the shadow of Eternal Death through it too. I look not "up into the Divine eye," as Richter has it, "but down into the bottomless eye-socket"—not upwards towards God, Heaven, and the Throne of Truth, but, too truly down; towards Falsity, Vanity, and the dwelling-place of Everlasting Despair. Good sirs, surely I by no means expect the opera will abolish itself this year or the next. But if you ask me why heroes are not born now, why heroisms are not done now, I will answer you. It is a world all calculated for strangling of heroisms. At every ingress into life the genius of the world lies in wait for heroisms; and, by seduction, or compulsion,

unweariedly does its utmost to pervert them or extinguish them. Yes, to its halls of sweating tailors, distressed needle-women, and the like, this opera of yours is the appropriate heaven. Of a truth, if you will read a Psalm of Asaph, and then come hither and read the Rossini and Coletti psalm, you will find the ages have altered a good deal. Nor do I wish all men to become Psalmist Asaphs, and fanatic Hebrews. Far other is my wish—far other, and wider, is now my notion of the universe. Populations of stern faces, stern as any Hebrew, but capable, withal, of bursting into inextinguishable laughter on occasions—do you understand that new and better form of character? Laughter also, if it come from the heart, is a heavenly thing. But at least and lowest, I would have you a population abhorring phantasms, abhorring unveracity in all things, and in your amusements, which are voluntary and not compulsory things, abhorring it most impatiently of all.

[From Bayard Taylor's Letters to the Tribune.]

The Handel Festival—The Opera, &c.—Church's Niagara.

LONDON, July 1.

I reached London in season to hear the last of Handel's oratorios—*Israel in Egypt*—in the Palace at Sydenham. I doubt whether any composer, dead or alive, has ever had such an ovation. Two thousand singers and nearly five hundred instrumental performers, interpreted his choruses to an audience of more than 17,000 persons. The *coup d'œil*, alone, was sublimer than any picture. The vast amphitheatre of singers, filling up the whole breadth of the western transept, stretched off into space, and the simultaneous turning of the leaves of their music books was like the appearance of "an army with banners," or the rustling of the wind in a mountain forest. We were so late that we could only cling to the outskirts of the multitude below, and I was fearful that we should not be able to hear distinctly—but I might as well have feared not hearing the thunder in a cloud over my head. Not only was the quarter of a mile of palace completely filled with the waves of the chorus, in every part, but they spread beyond it, and flowed audibly over the hills for a mile around. I kept my eye on the leader, Da Costa, whose single arm controlled the whirlwind. He lifted it, like Moses, and the plagues fell upon Egypt; he waved it, and the hailstones smote, crashing upon the highways and the temple-roofs; he stretched it forth, and the Red Sea waves parted, and closed again on the chariots of Pharaoh. He was lord of the tuneful hosts that day, and Handel himself, as he wrote the scores of the immortal work, could not have more perfectly incarnated its harmonies. Following him, I trod in the thunder marches of the two-fold chorus, and stood in the central calm of the stormy whirls of sound.

There is no doubt that, with the masses of the English people, Handel is the most popular composer. The opera is still an exotic, not yet naturalized to their taste; but Handel, with his seriousness, his cheerfulness, his earnestness, his serene self-reliance and undaunted daring, speaks directly to the English heart. His very graces have the simple quietness of the songs of Shakespeare, or those touches of tender fancy which glimmer like spots of sunshine through the cathedral gloom of Milton. The effect of the grand performance, however, was frequently marred by the sharp, dry sound of senseless clapping, demanding an encore, which Da Costa sensibly refused whenever it was possible. We who stood in the edges of the crowd were also greatly annoyed by the creaking boots of snobs who went idly walking up and down the aisles, and the chatter of the feminine fools, who came only to be heard and seen. In New York one might have the same annoyance, but by no possibility could it happen in Germany. * * *

Don Giovanni is having a great run in both Italian Operas, Grisi and Piccolomini being rivals in the part of *Donna Anna*. I heard the

former, and wondered at the consummate skill with which she managed a failing voice. Bosio was the *Zerlina*, but, though sweet and graceful as ever, she seemed to have lost something since she was in New York, five or six years ago. Herr Formes, as *Leporello*, was admirable, and Cerito appeared in the ballet scene with all her former grace and beauty; but the Italian Opera in London is not now what it was in Lumley's palmy days. Entertainments by individuals—single-string performers, playing on "a harp of a thousand strings"—are now very popular. The success of Albert Smith and Gordon Cumming has led the way to a number of solo performances, nearly all of which are very well attended. Mr. Drayton, (an American, I believe), gives what he calls "Illustrated Proverbs;" Miss P. Horton exhibits something of the same kind; Mr. Woodin pours forth an "Olio of Oddities;" Mr. and Mrs. Wilton announce their "Evenings with the American Poets," etc. All the world crowds on a Sunday to hear the Rev. Mr. Spurgeon, who splurges in the Surrey Musical Hall. He is, I am told, of the Beecher school, but with less ability, and impresses principally by his earnestness and the direct, practical nature of his sermons. People seem to be urged that he is a sincere man, though his face, as it appears in the shop-windows, is anything but an agreeable one to look upon—being round and full, with round eyes, flat, flabby cheeks, a pug nose, and short lips, gaping apart to exhibit some very prominent front teeth. * * * * *

Church's picture of Niagara has just arrived, and has been seen by a few connoisseurs, though there has yet been no public exhibition of it. I have heard but one opinion in regard to it. The exhibitor told me that Ruskin had just been to see it, and that he had found effects in it which he had been waiting for years to find. I am sorry that it is shown by gas-light, in a darkened room. Church's pictures will all bear the daylight; he needs no artificial trickeries of this kind. Some English artists had been, a few days previous, questioning me about landscape art in America, and I am delighted at being able to point to such a noble example in justification of my assertions. Cropsey, who is now living here, has a very fine autumnal picture in the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. I believe he is doing very well. Hart, the sculptor, has been settled here for more than a year past, and his admirable busts are beginning to excite attention. I wish I had time to speak of Millais's "Sir Isumbras," about which one hears the most conflicting opinions, and Rosa Bonheur's wonderful picture of "The Horse Fair." But as the latter is owned by an American, you will see it some day or other. I have seen nothing of Landseer's which at all approaches it.

Music in Universities.

[From the New York Musical World.]

The commencement season of our New England Colleges having arrived, we are led to speculate upon the question, What have our Colleges done for Music? Even in these institutions that profess to be *Universities*, has Music found any place? "A University," the dictionary tells us, "is a place where *all* the arts and sciences are studied;" but it would puzzle any one exceedingly to find out how *this* art is studied in such places in this country. Oxford and Cambridge, in Old England, have foundations for musical professorships; they give degrees to those who, on examination, show the proper proficiency, and "*honoris causa*," to those whose eminence deserves to be thus honored. It was in ancient times esteemed to be proper and necessary element in the education of a Prince; and even now the Prince Consort of England devotes no little attention to it, and gives good proof of his study. Among the composers of England, we find Lord Wellesley, a Governor-General of India; and the name of his illustrious brother, the Duke of Wellington, will be seen in some of our books of Church Music, as the composer of chants of no mean merit. *Nous avons changé tout cela.* Could

General Scott have been sent to Mexico, if he had been so unhappy as to have composed a psalm tune? Could "Johnny Mason," (as the French Court Journal has christened him) have represented Uncle Sam near the Court of Louis Napoleon if he had written a mass?

Hard-fisted and hard-headed Brother Jonathan, while he professes to admire and love the divine art, terribly despises the artist. He likes to hear singing and playing, but despises the performer. He is a terrible critic, (especially when he gets on a church singing committee), and there is nothing that he so loves or thinks he knows so much about as music. But woe betide the unfortunate man to whom chance or inclination have given some skill, in whom Nature has placed a real love of music, and education given some powers of execution! We know a venerable clergyman, not a thousand miles from the shadow of the University walls, who is an excellent performer upon the violin, who was passionately (though reasonably) fond of it; but the brethren and sisters of the church found it to be indecent and intolerable that their minister should be a fiddler, and he, for his brethren and companions' sake, unwilling to cause them to offend, though not without regret, "hung up the fiddle and the bow." That lawyer has a monstrous mill-stone about his neck who can sing or play, or even ventures to write down his thoughts about music. The doctor had better stick to his stethoscope, and not blow away at once his breath and his prospects of success through a flute. The venerable and respectable Mr. Two per cent. will never more be patient of his. The venerable Two per cent. picked up his education in the street, and laid the early foundation of his fortune in trading horses. Now, he is a pillar of the church, and criticizes terribly the selections of the refined amateur who leads the singers in the gallery. He is a practical man "with no nonsense about him."

Seriously, any proficiency in music, however small, is a bar to success in a professional man in any department. He is looked on as a flippant dreamer and idler, who sings as he goes through life, instead of calculating interest. If he sings, he cannot pray well, or plead well, or heal well.

But is not this art worthy to be to some extent taught in our colleges? And would not the sanction of Alma Mater give respectability to its practice in the eyes of the world, and of the worldly-minded? The scholar could reply, "I learned this at the feet of my dear Alma Mater, and prize it not the least among the instructions that she gave." What a refining, humanizing influence would go forth every year from college walls into every nook and corner of our land, if every one who left them carried with him some knowledge of this most refining and humanizing of the arts! We have in mind at present a case in point, in the example of an alumnus of old Harvard, who is at the head of one of our great manufacturing establishments. He thought that among a thousand men and women and children whom he employs, there should be some singers. He had but to ask the question and some seventy or eighty came forward, and he provided for them the proper teaching and the happiest results followed, to the great pleasure, not alone of those who took a part in the undertaking, but of the whole population of the town. Here is a case of the influence exerted in cultivating the taste of a town by a single man of refinement and enthusiasm, and in this case of not a little musical accomplishment and knowledge. But he is not for that any less efficient as the agent of one of our largest corporations.

All college-bred men are in positions more or less to aid in some such way in this pleasant work—especially the *clergy*, in whose education it is not only almost absolutely essential but also almost absolutely neglected. But as yet the college does nothing to educate this part of our nature. We learn a few psalm tunes, perhaps, in the college choirs, a few bacchanalian choruses or sentimental songs in the club-room, and that is all. Let us have something better. Let music be recognized in all our colleges as a proper

branch of the education of the Christian gentleman, that should receive some pruning and training and cherishing at the hands of Alma Mater, and not be suffered to grow as it has, all straggling and wild and full of thorns.

We have from the colleges our sweet and dearly-loved poets—Bryant, Longfellow, Willis, Lowell, Holmes! Shall we not have from their walls also sweet singers and the masters of the lyre? Shall we not give to the scholar this crowning grace, most graceful of all; and shall we not give to the artist the rounded fulness of the thorough education of the scholar?

At Cambridge last week we had music somewhat better than the clang of brass that is the normal music of the public days of our colleges. A chorus of students sang with well-trained voices the songs of *Auld Lang Syne*. Such entertainment adds not a little to the attractions that make the sons of fair Harvard throng to her jubilee; and they leave again her hallowed grounds touched with no little emotion, when they join as they did last week in the solemn chorus of the Parting Song.

w.

Peals of Bells.

(From the Boston Transcript.)

A writer in a late number of Dwight's Journal of Music (273) has a pleasant paper on the subject of bells, founded on the item travelling about, that Lowell is to have a chime of bells. He is right in saying that it should be a *peal* of bells; and I agree with him, that there is scarcely any sound under heaven more monotonous than chimes, the mere striking of any set of bells once.—No indeed; to have the music of the bells they must be rung; the bell must be struck several times by its own clapper as it makes nearly a revolution, and the whole set must be served the same way in succession and in a continuation of changes. Then you get the music of the peal; and for anything more noble, elevating, exhilarating, or joyous in the way of sound, there is no music to match it; it is the grandest music on earth; thunder alone surpasses it in sublimity. A band of music—let it be ever so good—can be heard only at a short distance; but a good peal of bells can be heard for miles. Our forefathers believed that the music of the bells frightened away evil spirits; and it is true—but not in the sense in which they believed it—the music of the bells will remove that languor which depresses the spirit when the mind and body are fatigued with the day's work. There is no truer lightener of the spirit than a peal of bells; it is to whole city what the band is to the company when they play one of their liveliest tunes; and, although a moderate distance lends an additional enchantment to their music, it is by no means disagreeable at the foot of the belfry.

Blessed be he, who first mooted this subject in this country, for now that the ball is set in motion we hope it will not stop until every city in the land has its peal of bells. Gentlemen of the press, see that it is kept up; it is one of the elements of civilization. It is as necessary as light, pure air and fresh water. A good peal of bells would be as good as Boston Common in summer—and a good deal better than the Common in winter—for it would gladden the hearts of thousands when the snow is deep, and the cold severe, and the Common unavailable; then by your own firesides, at Thanksgiving, at Christmas, and at New Year, you would have a new element of enjoyment in a lusty peal of bells; then, instead of the eternal fiz, crack, bang, bang, of the fire-crackers, you would have something wherewith merrily and appropriately to announce the *Fourth of July*. Then, when good news came, of whatever import—whether of the completion of the Trans-atlantic telegraph, or the abolition of slavery in these United States, you would have something whereby you could worthily announce the news to dwellers five miles round! Cannon and crackers sink into insignificance beside a peal of bells; besides, bells are made to imitate artillery itself—on the proper occasions. Bells can give the three-times-three and one cheer more—in their appropriate music, i. e., firing—making the

whole peal strike at the same instant and repeated as often as desired. Nothing can express universal gladness like a peal of bells—nay, in countries where bells are in plenty, it is not unusual to set the bells ringing on many private occasions, such as *births, marriages, and the arrival of welcome guests*. Our Boston belles—let them be ever so rich, or the occasion be made ever so magnificent, come not near the honor they might otherwise have, with a fine peal of bells to announce their wedding—and therefore let us have the bells.

It will be no small feather in the cap of Lowell, if she should be the first city in the Union that shall have a peal of bells—and it is devoutly to be hoped that a peal they intend, and not a mere chime. Good music can be got from six bells, but better from eight. I am inclined to think, too, that eight bells is the happy medium in bell music—giving all the sounds necessary, and minimizing the outlay required and the expense of ringing—not that this latter item need ever be so great as to prevent the smallest city from having its peal; as wherever bells are, ringers enough will be found who will love the exercise. Only have the flowers, the bees are sure to find them, and only get the bells and the ringers will be sure to grow round them. Wherever there are bells the ringers spring up, each one devoted to his bell, with a half dozen growing around him, like suckers to young trees, ready to step in his shoes whenever absence, or sickness or death prevent him being at his post. Whenever a good peal of bells shall have been once established, and the people get a taste of the music, we believe a new element of civilization will be introduced, and one the people will not willingly let die.

Some may fancy that half I say about the bells is no better than nonsense, but every one has read E. A. Poe's poem about the Bells, and if the mere jingle of the sleigh bells (a sound, by the by, that might be rendered more harmonious by having them of different tones on each team) could elicit so much praise from him, what would a glorious peal of eight large bells have done! And, as a finish to this paragraph, I will just cite a few of the poets in justification:

There is in souls a sympathy with sounds;
And as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased
With melting airs, or martial, brisk or grave:
Some chord in unison with what we hear
Is touched within us, and the heart replies—
How soft the music of those village bells,
Falling at intervals upon the ear
In cadence sweet, now dying all away,
Now pealing loud again, and louder still,
Clear and sonorous, as the gale comes on.

[Cowper.]

Charles Lamb says in prose:

"Of all sound of all bells—(bells, the music highest bordering upon heaven)—most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the old year."

And in verse:

Chiefly when
Their piercing tones fall sudden on the ear
Of the contemplant, solitary man,
Whom thoughts abstruse, or high, have chanced to lure
Forth from the walks of men, revolving oft,
And oft again, hard matter which eludes
And baffles his pursuit—thought-sick and tired
Of controversy, where ne'er appears,
No clue to his research, the lonely man
Half wishes for society again.
Him thus engaged the Sabbath bells salute
Sudden! his heart awakes, his ears drink in
The cheering music; his relenting soul
Yearns after all the joys of social life,
And softens with the love of human kind.

How fond the rustic's ear at leisure dwells
On the soft soundings of his village bells.

[Clare.
Milton.
D. J.]

Letter from Signor Corelli.

[Correspondence of the Gazette.]

SIR:—While I was thinking that if I were to write a letter to all those persons to whom I might wish, either through friendship or regard, to give such token of my good souvenir, I should have to sit down from morning to night scribbling away, the idea recurred to me to address this letter to you,

which you would kindly insert in your valuable paper, as being intended to remember me particularly to all those of my friends and pupils under whose eyes it might happen to fall.

After a fair passage of twelve days, we arrived in Liverpool on Sunday, June 30th, at 12 o'clock in the forenoon.

On landing, the officers at the custom house put my patience, a virtue wherewith I am not particularly gifted, to a very severe test. I hope, for my pupils' sake, that I have not lost it altogether.

I intended to start for London without delay, but the exhibition of the Art Treasury in Manchester held out a sufficient inducement to make a trip to that city, and most delighted have I been by doing so, as I had an opportunity of admiring the finest collection of works of Art that has ever been brought together. I had also the pleasure to see her most gracious Majesty the Queen.

As soon as I reached London, my first occupation was, of course, of going about paying visits to my acquaintances who happened to be in London. Mr. Lunley and Mr. Costa were foremost among the number, and the former gentleman favored me on the morrow with the following letter:

"Mr. L. presents his compliments to Mr. C., and has much pleasure in placing his name on the list of Entrées during his stay in London."

I availed myself the same day of the permission, and assisted in the evening at the performance of the *Trovatore*, where I heard Mlle. Spezia and Signor Giuglini, who is destined to a glorious career. Alboni was Azucena, with the same freshness of voice and justness of tone. I exchanged a few words with this lady about her last visit to America, and she seemed much pleased at the remembrance thereof.

Beneventano, an old acquaintance, sings better, and still better would he sing, if he could do away with a sort of affectation peculiar to his idiosyncrasy.

From Her Majesty's Theatre I ran to the Lyceum, where I arrived just in time to admire our favorite star, Bosio, in the last act of the *Trovatore*. After the performance, I went on the stage to shake hands with that lady, Mme. Nantier Didiée, and my old comrade, Ronconi, who came bowing towards me in his operatic costume, with all the assumption of seriousness, and thereby puzzling me very much, as I did not at first recognize him. I was at the moment speaking with Signor Costa, the celebrated Director, under whose conduct I sang in former times at Her Majesty's Theatre. He was extremely kind to his old friend Corelli. He introduced me to the Manager of the Lyceum, Mr. Gye, who very kindly sent me an invitation for next day to witness Mlle. Ristori's wonderful performance of *Medea*. It is impossible for me to express in words my feelings of enthusiasm and overwhelming emotion whilst following this high-gifted artiste through those scenes of heartrending woe and despair.

I shall now speak of the young lady whom they call here little dear Piccolomini; and in truth I must say that her performance of *La Traviata* is all that can be desired.

But what shall I say of Giuglini? All the praise that has been bestowed upon him is scarcely equal to convey an idea of his real merits. His voice is of so sweet a texture that it goes straight to one's heart, and long after he has ceased singing, his last melody still sounds in your ear.

On my arrival here, I was unable to satisfy my great desire to hear Mario, as he was rather unwell. So I went to pay him a visit. I talked with him about the "big gun," and he very much approved of my idea, and very kindly offered me letters of introduction for several of the most distinguished persons of Vienna. As he subsequently recovered, I had the good luck to hear him yesterday in *La Traviata*, and I found him to be always the same sweet, soul-stirring singer.

On the day of my visit to Mario, after a most substantial luncheon, I went forth with him and Mme. Grisi to the Crystal Palace. The adage goes that—

"Qui no ha visto Sevilla,
No ha visto marravilla."

but I think that the proverb in question would be more fitly applied to this wondrous building, and to the wonders contained in it. Why, you are led from amazement to amazement, and so many are the beauties to be seen, that you don't know which to admire most. The waters in the adjoining lawn were in full play, but the sky was ra' gloomy, which detracted so much from the general effect.

As you will perceive by the date, this letter is written on a Sunday, which day is pretty much the same here as in Boston, that is, very dull—and it is the more so to-day, as it is raining very heavily indeed, and so it has been for the last few days. This makes me regret the clean streets of Boston,

those of London being on such occasions in a most filthy state. But I shall forget all these little vexations in the good company of my excellent friend, Mme. Bosio, to whose house in St. John's Wood I am now hastening to go to dinner.

To-morrow I shall visit again the Crystal Palace, as a single inspection is hardly enough to walk it through, and in the evening I shall go to the Lyceum, to see Shakespeare's *chef d'œuvre*, *Macbeth*, interpreted by the Italian troupe, and the grand tragédienne, Mme. Ristori. After the performance I shall start for Paris, where I expect to arrive in the course of Tuesday morning. My stay in the French capital will be very short, as I shall leave in a couple of days for Italy, where my friend the Gun is waiting me, for a regular introduction to the Sardinian authorities.

L. C.

MARIO'S SHADOW.—Side by side with the picture of Rachel dying—a wreck of her former self, we have the news of the dreadful death of Miss Coutts, the lady who is so well-known to the opera-going public as the "patron-saint" of Mario, and the individual who had more influence upon his stage efforts than all the critics and the public combined. A French journal gives an account of the death of the lady, as well as some facts relating to her life. It seems that, from the first moment her eyes rested upon Mario, she became the strange woman who has so completely mystified the public if not the celebrated tenor himself. She commenced a solitary life, following him wherever he went, and invariably presenting herself on the night of his first appearance in any place. St. Petersburg, Madrid, London, Paris, and even America, were all the same to her; nothing would prevent her taking her place in the box or dress circle at his first performance. She never met him; never exchanged a word, written or spoken with the object of her strange adoration; but there was a witchery in her pale face and riveted eyes that acted like magic upon the singer, who has oftentimes to be compared to one of those "birds who can sing, but won't sing, and must be made to sing," but who, in her presence, threw himself into the music and sang as only Mario could sing—when he would. A few weeks ago it seems that he was to have a benefit at the Théâtre-Italien, and of course Miss Coutts prepared to attend in the most elaborate toilette possible. Dressing herself in her own room, unattended by any maid, she placed the lighted candle in a chair before the tall mirror, the better to judge of the effect of her toilette. Turning around, and looking "first on this side and then on that," a flounce of the thin gauze approached too near the light, and instantly the lady was enveloped in flames. With much presence of mind she threw herself on the bed, intending to smother the blaze in the counterpane; but unluckily the maid had thrown a couple of thin dresses just from the mantua-maker's, upon it, and they added to the blaze most fearfully. Miss Coutts screamed for help, but it came too late. She lingered several days, suffering intensely, yet refusing to the last any medical assistance; and died, pressing to her lips a rose-colored letter, the only one ever written her by Mario, in which he expressed his sympathy for her sufferings, and thanked her with deepest gratitude for the applause and approbation she had always publicly shown him. And thus ended a life, the story of which "is stranger than fiction." When time has thrown over it the veil of distance, some future Hawthorne will weave from it the pages of a veritably "thrilling" romance.—*Worcester Palladium.*

From my Diary, No. 10.

JULY 25.—"This important project, long delayed," says the *Traveller* this morning, "but now so pressingly demanded for building purposes, is likely to be soon commenced." "This important project" is the filling up of the Back Bay.

And how is the work to be done? With any regard to the future beauty, convenience and health of the city, or only with the one object in view of making the greatest number of lots possible? Is the plan of the grand avenue into the city given up? Is the last hope of Boston's possessing one street, which shall for all time be its pride and greatest ornament, extinguished? I ask for information.

When I think of the streets of European cities, which receive from travellers epithets of superlative intensity for their splendor and beauty, and compare them with what we might have at hardly more than a nominal cost, if our people's government had a tenth part the taste of royal governments abroad, and reflect how little hope there is of having it, I fear that the religion most prevalent is that which teaches the worship of the almighty dollar. But perhaps provision is made for all we would ask.

I have taken strangers lately to my favorite point of view, for the panorama of Boston and its environs.

One gentleman from the South, as our carriage came upon the apex of Corey's hill, leaped from the vehicle. He was so struck with the richness and beauty of the scene, that for some moments he wished not to speak or be spoken to.

Then and there we discussed the matter, and tried to form some estimate of the debt of gratitude which succeeding generations would owe the Brookline millionaires, could they be induced to purchase those grounds and lay them out for a public park forever.

I looked forward in fancy to the time when all the surrounding country, far as the beautiful ranges of hills which limit the view, shall be filled with human habitations, and reflected upon the feelings which then would swell the breast of the stranger, who from this point should look down upon the wide spread city, and should be told that this spot, when all other heights around Boston had become private property, was bought by the wise and liberal millionaires of 1850, and given to the use, recreation and delight of the poor man.

I fancied my stranger to be one who had seen much of the world, whose eye was open to beauty, whose heart could appreciate a noble deed. But let me interest you in the description, as Sterne says, or something like it.

It is about A. D., 1950. The Back Bay is filled up, and noble, stately residences occupy its now loathsome surface. From some point near the public garden, as we stand upon the observatory on Corey's hill, we can trace a broad avenue, lined with rows of trees, wider than "Unter den Linden," in Berlin, bordered with magnificent buildings, elevated enough to enable the trains upon the railroads to pass beneath, and stretching directly out to that most beautiful of suburban towns, Brookline. From the outer end of this noble avenue winds a broad and beautiful street to the hill on which we stand. The hill is now planted with all the beautiful varieties of American forest trees, and sweet-scented and flowering shrubs. The oak in its several species, intermixed with beautiful clumps of pines, firs and hemlocks—that noble tree!—hickories and chestnuts, maples and ashes, all in their places—all beautiful in themselves, all still more beautiful by contrast with each other—all are here; in this spot the fragrant sassafras, in that the sweet fern, there the laurus benzoin, and here again the sweet briar; a patch of the kalmia latifolia refreshes the eye on the one hand, rhododendron or azalea on the other.

It is now "toward the going down of the sun," and the fashionable world of Boston are driving out in long procession over the milldam, winding up the side of Corey's, and after long looking at the glories below and around, pass down upon the other side, and beneath the shade of the glorious old elms which line the streets, they drive on to the grand avenue—the "Boulevard" of the city. This drive has become to Boston more than Hyde Park is to London. Down among the groves and shrubbery of the hill sides, a thousand poor mothers with their children are sitting, and drinking in the scene with emotions which they do not understand, but which on the Great Book are passed to the credit of him of whom it is written, "Blessed is he who considereth the poor and needy."

"I have during my stay in Boston," says the stranger, "visited your institutions of learning, your noble charities, and the magnificent 'cities of the dead,' which the wisdom and generosity of the last century established. But beyond and above them all, I must place that enlightened taste, that nobleness of disposition, which led to the purchase of this hill, and its improvement for a public resort. A hundred years ago I can easily conceive of the Common yonder, and the broad acres below us, then open fields, as having been sufficient for the recreation of the people. But now, with this dense population, and with no suitable provision in the way of parks and public pleasure grounds, what could the people do without this spot? True, the enclosure is not very extensive—a mere patch compared with the public grounds of foreign cities—but then the views it affords are so superb as to more than make up for the smallness of its extent. Indeed, I consider such a spot as this as one of the noblest of educational institutions. The people are

*taught refinement who come here; their souls are touched by the sentiment of beauty; they acquire new ideas of the grandeur of civil society, as they look down upon the vast human hive, and they learn to feel the importance of order, the necessity of obedience to the laws, and the value of social harmony. They see the rich pass by them in showy vehicles, but reflect that they share the pleasures of the rich, and that from them their privilege of coming hither was obtained.

And now the sun is sinking behind the hills of Waltham, and lighting up Boston, and Cambridge, and Charlestown, with a fiery glow. A thousand eyes are sparkling with delight at the magical changes of color in earth, air and sea. A hush comes over the multitude; no noisy conversation is heard; the sense of beauty is aroused in all; the hum of busy life comes up to our ears with singular distinctness; the broad-faced moon is rising above dome and spire and house-top; and new crowds are wending their way hitherward to take the places of those who now retire to their dwellings, perhaps in lanes and alleys, but who carry with them the sweet influence of beauty and grandeur. I honor the names of Perkins, and Lawrence, and Appleton, and Peabody; but, Mr. Diarist, I reverence his memory still more, who in an age of money-making and school endowments, looked with kindly eye upon the laborer and mechanic, and gave of his abundance, that the laborer's wife and child should forever have this magnificent spot for their recreation, and for the development in their souls of the sentiment of beauty."

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, AUG. 1, 1857.

Promenade Concerts.

Artists or cultivated amateurs cannot of course look for much to interest them, in a strictly musical and artistic sense, in concerts of "light and favorite pieces," as performed by common military bands, small theatre or museum orchestras, &c. But this is no reason for regarding all such cheap and popular music as of no consequence. The most refined musical taste derives chance moments of gratification from the passing music of the streets, brassy and hacknied as for the most part it is; and every one, through a mere fellow feeling, through natural human sympathies with any general joy around him, must rejoice in all provisions whereby the popular ear and heart and sense of rhythm and of harmony are wooed to any sort of pleasant intimacy with so pure and beautiful an enlivener as music. Better the most hacknied ditties, better negro melodies, "anvil choruses," and clap-trap polkas, quick-steps, patriotic airs, or any music, we would say, than none at all. As long as the simple *sense* of rhythm and melody and harmony is quickened, there must be more field than there would be otherwise, for the reception of a better seed. What is humdrum to our ears may be the preparation of thousands for the appreciation, some day, of something a little nearer to the character and dignity of Art.

We rejoice therefore in everything that is done to furnish the people, the masses, freely or at small cost, with frequent feasts of music such as they have most delight in, provided it have some true pretensions to excellence both in the composition and in the performance—enough at least to educate the general sense or appetite a little way above the present level, and create a general demand for music of a somewhat better

order. We rejoice to believe, too, that our popular street music, especially the music of our bands, which always feels its way by consultation of the public pulse, is better than it was, and on the whole improving. There is another side to the matter, to be sure, when we come to look into it critically; but we leave that for the present.

Our object for the present is to congratulate the believers in music as one of the great and essential agencies of true national and social culture, (especially in a republic), first, on the success of the experiment for some years past, of summer evening concerts on the Common, at the public cost—a success shown by the eager general demand for it this summer, and the odium incurred by the unlucky Aldermen through whose impracticable "consciences" it is withheld from us. And, secondly, on the success, if we may trust the newspapers, of the experiment of which we hinted in our last, and in which the realization almost outran the rumor; for, behold, that very day the corners of the streets were placarded with invitations to a whole week of "People's Promenade Concerts," at the Boston Music Hall, at the mere nominal price of fifteen cents admission, twenty-five cents for a lady and gentleman, or one dollar for two admissions through the week. The Hall, we understand, has been well frequented, considering the weather, every night of this week, by audiences varying from 1,000 to 1,500; a crowd to all appearances respectable and orderly and happy; no vulgarity or rudeness; nothing to offend and drive away the pure and the refined; but all in keeping with the beautiful and noble place. Crowds stand in groups or promenade upon the spacious lower floor, while others sit and watch them from the balconies; and the music which our various bands have discoursed in turn seems to have given general satisfaction. So far well. We have not witnessed for ourselves, but we can easily imagine it, knowing so well the place, the bands, the kinds of music now in fashion, and the people who seek pleasure in it.

We shall soon know if the experiment has paid, and whether the gentlemen, whoever they may be, who were inspired to make the trial, have found it safe or profitable to keep on. If not already profitable, we see no reason why such concerts may not easily be made so, yielding a fair remuneration to the owners of the Hall, to the musicians, to the conductors of the enterprise, as well as nightly opportunities of refining recreation to thousands of all classes. So far so well. Let cheap concerts for the people first become an institution upon this or any decent footing, and then there will be room for all improvement. We wish first to join hands with a wholesome public movement, and show our interest and faith in it, before we commence to criticize. And now having done this, we propose, in another article, to throw out some suggestions touching the best composition of a band or orchestra, the best selections of music, &c., whereby such popular concerts may be made not less popular and far more improving.

Musical Chit-Chat.

Our correspondent, who gave us last week the interesting account of the Normal Musical Institute at North Reading, estimated the number of pupils at about seventy. We understand that this falls short of the mark, and that the class this season really

numbers almost ninety.... Some one writes from Paris to the *Courier des Etats Unis*, that Mr. Ullman has engaged to come to America besides Mme. FREZZOLINI, the famous French tenor, ROGER, and VIEUXTEMPS, the violinist; also that the same indefatigable little manager has been making serious but vain attempts to engage LAMARTINE for a course of lectures in this country; and that he has persuaded VIVIER, the hornist, to postpone his visit to another season, lest his brightness should prove too excessive for the full shining of the stars above-named.... Our Philadelphia neighbors have a pleasant notion of their own musical pre-eminence; thus, speaking of a recent notice in our columns of Dr. SCHILLING's arrival in this country, *Fitzgerald* says:

We would like Dr. Schilling to visit Philadelphia. We believe this to be the city in which his success would be the greatest, and our sister cities will pardon our civic pride, when we assign the reason, that in this city is the most musical appreciation. We believe this city will become very prominent as the musical metropolis of America. We have a finer Opera House, and more hand organs than any other city in the Union.

We have the programme of a Musical Soirée given a fortnight since by the young ladies of Maplewood Seminary, (J. Holmes Agnew, D. D., principal), at Pittsfield, Mass., which shows decided progress in a right direction. The first part consisted of the "Midsummer Night's Dream" overture, played on four pianos, followed by the entire *Forty-second Psalm* of Mendelssohn: "As the hart pants," &c. One such work well studied is worth all the fashionable medley of fantasias, variations, polkas, sentimental ditties, and operatic cavatinas, that usually figure in the exhibitions of such schools. The credit of this good example, we presume, belongs chiefly to the head of the musical department of Maplewood, Mr. J. L. ENSIGN, formerly an earnest member of the New York Philharmonic Society. The second part of the Soirée was miscellaneous, embracing overtures to "Tell" and *La Gazza Ladra*; Thalberg's *Moise*, played by a teacher; Cavatinas from *Ernani* and *Robert*; choruses from "Tell," &c., &c.

The London concert in memory of DOUGLAS JERROLD, was a great success. Clara Novello, Miss Dolby, Sims Reeves, Ernst, Bottesini, and others, were engaged in it.... LEVASSEUR, who has been recognized for forty-four years as one of the best bass singers of Paris, has retired from the profession in full vigor of voice.... MARETZEK is in Paris, in search, (says *Fitzgerald*), of a soprano, contralto, tenor and bass, to be added to his present force.... JULLIEN has produced at the Surrey Gardens his new composition, "The Great Comet," which is announced as being "electric and empiric, terrific and comic." The *Leader* says it is a disguised overture to the celebrated oratorio he has in his portfolio—*Le fin du Monde!*.... Mlle. CAROLINE LEHMANN, who sang so finely in concerts, oratorios and German operas in this country, is now the prima donna of the opera at Hamburg.... At a recent production of Rossini's *Barbiere*, at the Opera House in Berlin, the Spanish prima donna, FORTUNI, sang the part of Rosina in Italian; two introduced *morceaux* (in the singing lesson scene) in Spanish; the dialogue she spoke in French, and all the other parts in the opera were sung and spoken in German.

We find the following account of the music performed recently in New Orleans at the anniversary of the canonization of St. Vincent de Paul, on which occasion high mass was celebrated at St. Patrick's Church:

The Concert Mass of Mercadante, a brilliant and florid composition, was performed, on the occasion, by the choir of St. Patrick's, under the direction of Mr. Labache. Mr. Trust presiding at the organ. Mr. Cripps, the accomplished organist, also assisted. Members of other choirs lent their aid in giving

effect to the performance, which was admirable and impressive, throughout. Besides the music of the mass, a "Veni Creator," by Hummel, an "Ecce panis," by Gluck, and morceau of Lambilotte, were introduced, and all were sung, with great effect, by the soloists and the choir.

The New York *Mirror*, in delighted strain, reports progress of Mlle. VESTVALI, the popular contralto and opera managress, who has had such triumphs in Mexico, Havana, New Orleans, Mobile, St. Louis, Cincinnati, &c., and states that "the lady has purchased 30,000 acres of land in Tehuantepec, in Mexico, with a view of establishing a colony; and has also forwarded to London \$75,000, so that she has no reason to complain of the result of her three years' labor on this side of the Atlantic." Also: "She has received splendid offers from Paris and St. Petersburg, but will not yet take her final farewell of the United States. She will go immediately to Europe, to engage an entirely new grand troupe, and will, on her return, proceed to South America. She received an offer, we hear, from Mr. Burton, who is at the West, to appear at his theatre up town, on the very liberal terms of \$2500 per month, but was compelled to decline it."

The London *Chronicle* furnishes the following statement of the receipts and expenditures of the Handel Festival:

About 40,000 persons attended during the Festival, including 9,000 admission of parties engaged in the performances. A very large proportion of the audience paid half a guinea, so that nearly £23,000 were taken, or \$111,000 in our currency. The expenses were originally limited to £10,000, but they swelled to £13,000, and therefore only £10,000 were realized as profits. Of this sum, the Crystal Palace takes seven ninths, or £8,000, and the balance is to be invested for another grand festival in 1859. If that do not take place, the Crystal Palace and Sacred Harmonic Society divide it.

THALBERG, perhaps not all of his admirers are aware, is something of a wag. No sooner has he turned his back upon the audience, after playing one of those wonderful fantasias, than the sedate and quiet face beams with all manner of fun, wherewith he salutes the "few friends" in the green room. He is given to practical jokes. With the gravest air imaginable he has been taking lessons on the banjo (!), of which M. De Trobriand, the entertaining critic of the *Courier des Etats Unis*, makes a pleasant story; we borrow the *Musical Review's* translation:

Thalberg, returned to New York from his triumphant tour in the interior, is reposing gracefully and quietly on his laurels. At the present, he dreams only of a *far niente* sesson at the sea-side, and if, from the force of habit, he must indulge in some musical recreation, it is not with the piano-forte.

"Not with the piano-forte?" do you ask? "And what, then, may it be?"

We give you ten, yes, a hundred guesses, but we counsel you, as you value your comfort, to "give up" at once. Know that Thalberg, the great Thalberg, reposes from his royal sovereignty in cultivating—the banjo! We have written it—the banjo!

Here are the facts. Entering his apartments the other day at the St. Nicholas, in place of the magnificent Érard we were accustomed to find there, there appeared a suspicious box of somewhat musical form, and bearing the significant address: *S. Thalberg, New York*.

"In the name of St. Cecilia, is it not a banjo case?"

"It is nothing else," replied Thalberg, in his usual quiet and modest tones.

"And," we continued, "You play on this odd instrument?"

"I have taken ten lessons," responded, most humbly, the celebrated man; and encouraged, doubtless, by the admiration plainly depicted in our countenance, he added:

"And I will acknowledge that I have made considerable progress already."

"Pray let us have the special favor of judging for ourselves! All the world has heard Thalberg upon the piano-forte; let us have the privilege of hearing him on the banjo!"

With his uniform kindness, he at once opened the case. It was empty. Thalberg, with the enthusi-

asm of all young students, had attacked with too much warmth the melody:

"O Susannah, don't you cry for me,
I come from Alabama, with my banjo on my knee."

and alas! the instrument was now gone to the shop for repair.

Thus we have not yet heard Thalberg on the banjo! When we have that honor the world shall surely know it. Oh! that we could be in Paris when, on the artist's return, this new accomplishment is made known to the public of that city! Nothing of the like has been dreamed of there, and all the little eccentricities of Vivier will be entirely eclipsed. Every man will be button-holed in the streets, *not* for the salutation, "How do you do?" but with the query: "Have you heard Thalberg's banjo?"

"The banjo! What in the name of Saxe is that?"

"A primary affair; the national instrument of America, (the black part of it at least); a guitar finger-board, attached to a gourd drum."

For a week, Paris will think of nothing else. Government may, if it pleases, make a new *coup d'état*; no one will pay the slightest attention to it, for the great affair of the hour will be to hear Thalberg's banjo!

OLE BULL and his son sailed from this port on Wednesday in the steamer *America*, for Europe. Ole has been successfully and industriously concertizing in Maine and Canada. While in Lowell he gave a concert in aid of the peal of bells to be erected in that city, and one of the largest bells will bear his name as donor.... The Musical Institute at Newport, R. I., inaugurated with due ceremony, about the last of June, a new Hall in "Narragansett Building." Choruses from Mozart's Twelfth Mass and other selections were sung, and a service of silver was presented in the name of the ladies of the Institute to their devoted teacher and conductor, Mr. EBEN TOURJEE. This presentation was followed by good speeches from leading persons in the town, full of enthusiasm for the divine Art, and of thanks to the teacher who had done so much to awaken a true interest in music, all of which are set forth at length in the *Newport News*, of June 29.... The "Keystone Musical Magazine, and *Physiological(!)* Musical Advocate" is the long and singular title of the last new specimen of musical journalism which has been sent us. It is published monthly in Lancaster, Pa., and edited by A. N. JOHNSON and WM. F. DUNCAN. The leading article of the number before us (No. 9) objects, very fairly, to what it calls "the old system of learning to sing," that it makes so much account of learning to *read* music, to the neglect of due efforts to cultivate the voice, improve the expression, &c. Against this "old system," (old here, we suppose it means, for we doubt if it has begun to be in Europe) it upholds its own peculiar notion of a "physiological" training of the voice, which of course is not new. The article referred to speaks very disrespectfully, we are pained to see, of the newspaper musical critics, thus:

The senseless twattle of the critics of city newspapers (who are always asses) does much towards producing this state of things. According to them, the chaste and perfect performance of a psalm tune, an easy glee, or a simple ballad, is abominable, but the blundering, coarse, uncouth attempt at an oratorio chorus or song, charming! admirable!! sublime!!!

VERDI has been offered 80,000 francs to write a new opera for the next season in St. Petersburg. "Some Germans think this a very good omen, as from Petersburg to Siberia is not very far!" Pretty well, Herr Hagen! Elsewhere we read: Verdi's *Simone Boccanegra*, after making a terrible *fiasco* at Venice, has, to the surprise of every body, created an immense furor at the new theatre of Reggio, near Brescia. Verdi and the chief artists called before the curtain 32 times (thirty-two times)!

DR. CRYSLANDER, the German gentleman entrusted by the Halle Committee with the task of writing the biography of Handel, to be ready for the centenary performances of 1859, and to accompany the new

German edition of Handel's works,—is now in England in quest of materials. MARSCHNER, the German composer, is in London.

Musical Intelligence.

London.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE. (*From the Musical World, July 11.*)—The coming week will bring the subscription to a close. Monday evening is devoted to the benefit of Signor Giuglini, on which occasion he will appear in no less than five different parts. Of these one will be a first appearance, and the remaining series will be selected from the operas of *Il Trovatore*, *Lucia, I Martiri*, and *La Favorita*. *L'Elisir d'Amore* is the work selected for Tuesday, the principal performers being Piccolomini, Rossi, Belletti and Belart, and the first appearance of Marie Taglioni is fixed for the same day. On Thursday *Don Giovanni* will be repeated.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.—The long promised *Fra Diavolo*, adapted to the Italian stage, with additions and modifications by MM. Scribe and Auber, the author and composer, was brought out on Thursday night, July 9, in presence of a crowded audience, and with complete success.

As *La Muette de Portici* made the reputation of Auber at the Grand Opera, so *Fra Diavolo* confirmed it at the Opera Comique. These remarkable works, had he written no other, would have sufficed to place him at the head of the French school of composers; but he has since maintained that high position through a series of brilliant productions, only surpassed in beauty and variety by the operas of his great contemporary, Rossini, to whom, although wholly unlike in style, he has been justly compared in fertility;—the proviso being allowed for, that while the Italian finished his career before he reached the age of 40, the Frenchman is still active and producing at past 70. Of all the amusing books with which M. Scribe has supplied his eminent compatriot, and enriched the repertory of the Opera Comique, not one is more happily constructed, fuller of incident, or better fitted for musical treatment than *Fra Diavolo*; and the wonder is that long before now it had not found its way in some convenient shape to the Italian stage. Besides its other characteristics, the music has the merit of being essentially vocal; every character is a singing character; and now that the dialogue is turned into accompanied recitative (as in the instance of Meyerbeer's *Etoile du Nord*), the opera may be said to be naturalized Italian, and we are much mistaken if it is not destined to hold permanent possession of the boards. It had previously delighted thousands, and run a prosperous career in a German and an English dress, and nothing but this was wanted to consummate its European triumph.

In addition to the accompanied recitatives into which the spoken dialogue of the French opera has been converted, to suit the exigencies of the Italian stage, some new *morceaux* have been written expressly by the composer, some modifications made in the concerted pieces, and one air interpolated from an old opera. In the first act a new comic descriptive song has been introduced for Lord Allcash (we use the English name—the Italian is Lord Roeburg), founded on the Rossini model; and a new trio for tenor and two basses, for *Fra Diavolo* and the *Robbers*. In the second act the grand bravura air from *Le Serment* is given to Zerlina, constituting the great vocal display of the performance for Madame Bosio. This, however, it would seem, necessitates the omission of the slow movement, "Oh, hour of joy," in the bed-room scene, and which the admirers of the opera will be sorry to lose—more sorry, indeed, than glad to gain the brilliant air from the *Serment*. In the last act the novelties are a short and pleasing duet for Zerlina and Lorenzo, and a *tarentella* dance introduced in the wedding *fête* scene. There are also some alterations in the finales to the second and third acts; but these are not very important. The recitatives are most masterly, and so well dove-tailed, as it were, with the music, that even those to whom the score is familiar could not always point out when the old dialogue is departed from. Of the novelties written expressly for the Italian revival, we may say briefly, that the comic air for Ronconi is composed with a view to the humor of that incomparable artist, and that he sings and acts it to perfection; that the trio for male voices is worthy of Auber in his best moments; that the duet for soprano and tenor is very charming, but somewhat *de trop* in the scene; and that the air from *Le Serment* was well selected for Mme. Bosio, whose vocal capabilities required more brilliant and telling music than Auber thought proper to give his original Zerlina.

Mme. Bosio's singing was exquisite. The music occasionally is too low for her; but she has frequent opportunities in the opera for brilliant display—witness the quintet in the first act, and the song in the second act, "Tis to-morrow," with its sparkling florid passages; and the air from *Le Serment* could hardly be surpassed in facile execution and vivacity of expression.

Mlle. Marai, as Lady Allcash, did not apparently feel the importance of her part, and was somewhat ineffective in the first song and the duet with Lord

Allcash. Nevertheless, she displayed her usual talent and carefulness in the quintet in the first scene, and the trio in the bed-room, given to perfection with Mme. Bosio and Sig. Ronconi.

Fra Diavolo was impersonated by Sig. Gardoni with a great deal of spirit and animation. He looked, however, too juvenile: showed nothing of the brigand in his manner or deportment; and was dressed like a young Englishman prepared to go to a picnic party. His singing was characterized by great taste and expression, and he gave the serenade "Young Agnes," most sweetly, and in a highly finished—almost *poli-shed*, manner.

As everybody expected, Ronconi "created" the part of Lord Allcash. His entrance was the signal for a universal shout of laughter. He looked, spruce attire in a full suit of nankeen, and wore a straw hat. He had evidently made up his mind to have a good "go in" for fun, and such was the effect, that the audience might be said to have laughed more than they listened all the evening. The well-known duet, "I don't object," was irresistibly comic. He made points on every word and every note. Every look was followed by laughter; every movement and gesture received its acclamation. While he was on the stage he was the cynosure of all eyes. No one else was dreamt of. It was Ronconi—always Ronconi—nothing but Ronconi.

The two robbers never before found such absolute masters of the characters as in Signor Tagliafico and M. Zelger.

The *Athenaeum*, (July 4), which seems to be among the admirers of the pianist, RUBINSTEIN, who is such a stone of stumbling to most of the London critics, speaks thus of a new composition by him on Milton's "Paradise Lost":

Two English composers, Dr. Wylde and Mr. Lodge Ellerton, have attempted the subject—and last and most aspiring of all comes M. Rubinstein, the full score of whose "mystery," in three acts, we have perused—the work being ready now for translation and rehearsal. It seems to us full of matter to advance the young composer's reputation—the first part being devoted principally to the battle of the angels and the fall of the rebels, with *Lucifer*, "son of the morning," at their head—the second to "the Creation" of the world and of our first parents—the third to the temptation—"Man's first disobedience," and the expulsion of the pair from the garden of Eden. It would not be becoming to say more in commendation, qualification, or detailed description of a work which can hardly fail at no distant period to come to public judgment.

PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS.—The *Athenaeum* does not join the general strain of praise; read:

On Monday evening we had the last of those "stale, flat and unprofitable" meetings, the Philharmonic Concerts. It is long since we have heard the "Jupiter Symphony" so coarsely given. Mr. Cooper's performance of Beethoven's violin Concerto was good, in spite of the accompaniments. The seventeen *Variations Sériesées* of Mendelssohn, which Madame Schumann is fond of playing, are not well selected for a grand concert—and will be found dry by many, even when they are heard in the most serious chamber. If Miss L. Pyne had determined to show that an American tour is not to be gone through without "wear and tear," she could not have accomplished her object more completely than by selecting the *Trio* of voice with three flutes, from "L'Etoile du Nord," her song of return. This, too, she sang in its shortened version, (the one arranged by M. Meyerbeer for the stage), and not as a concert-piece. But the attempt proved that her voice stands in need of rest—and the style, formerly so neat and pointed, of being polished anew. The other singer was Miss Dolby. There has been small pleasure in attending or in chronicling the proceedings of the Philharmonic Society this year: which lives, (if life there be), on its old reputation. Of enterprise, or wisdom in selection, there has been little: M. Rubinstein's appearance being the solitary novelty which has marked the season;—and Prof. Bennett is as far from being satisfactory in conducting the band as he was the first day, when he attempted to bring it back to order after it had been "demoralized" (as the French use the verb) by Herr Wagner's strange proceedings.

The prospectus of a subscription Comic Italian Opera, to be given at the St. James's Theatre, has been issued.

This is to commence on the 16th of November:—to give six performances a week, with a double company of artists (*quare*, orchestra and chorus?), during three months. The list of operas from among which "the Direction will select and reproduce in London the most famous and popular, besides the ancient repertory," runs as follows:—*"Il Columella," "Crispino e la Comare," "Il Barraio di Preston," "Don Checco," "Pipet," "Don Bucefalo," "Don Procopio," "I Montetari Falsi," "Tutti in Maschera," "Amori e Trappole," "Le Convenienze Teatrali," "Don Desiderio Disperato," "Chi dura vince," "Le Prigioni d'Edinburgro," "Chiara di Rosenberg," "Il Campanello," "La Betly," "Olivio e Pasquale," "L'Aio in Imbarazzo," "Il Domino Nero," "La Morta a Napoli," "La Dama e il Zoccolao,*

*'Precauzione,' 'Scaramuccia,' 'Eran due ed or son tre,' 'Il Ventaglio,' by Donizetti, Ricci, Fioravanti, Cagnoni, De Giosa, Nini, Defferrari, Rossi, Raimondi. The company announced as already engaged consists of Mesdames Fumagalli, Vaschetti, Luigia Tamburini, —MM. Daniele, Serazzi, Bartolucci, Fumagalli, Ciampi, Casaciello, Castelli. In addition to these, we are promised in print "a *comprimaria*, a second *tenor comprimario*, a second *bass*, *seconda donna*, of distinguished merit." All this bears a charming and cheerful promise of novelty, and a winter opera would be welcome; but why should this be second-rate Italian—wherefore not French?—wherefore (most of all) not English?*

PARIS.—The Opera Comique has presented a new opera for the amusement of the Parisian grocers and tradesmen, entitled the "Clef des Champs," and the Theatre Lyrique, laying aside "Oberon," announces the "Nuits d'Espagne." The first opera seems to have been particularly successful. Mme. Dubarry has taken the "key of the fields" for a little promenade by herself, and her royal lover, Louis XV., goes in search of her. He discovers her under a tree, near Noisy-le-Roi, in the costume of a shepherdess, talking with a court gallant who was a former friend. The king discovers her, and supplicates her to return to Versailles. She consents, upon condition that the Duke of Choiseul is disgraced, and a minister of her own appointed. The piece introduces an *aubergiste*, who is also an admirer of Madame's, and the three form the principal parts. The piece is described as well constructed and amusing. The music is by M. Deffes. The "Nuits d'Espagne" are nights where lovers court young black-eyed *mejas*, and carry them off, in spite of unreasonable parents. The opera is full of choruses of *matadors*, *picadores*, *banderilleros*, *toreros*, and similar gentry, common to the peninsula, and contains a young midshipman, by way of relief. M. Lessage and Mlle. Moreau débuted in this first representative.

The *Gazette Musicale* announces a one-act comic opera, founded on "Le Mariage Extravagant," of Désaix, and set by M. E. Gautier, which has just been produced at the Opera Comique of Paris—describes "the stand" made at the Grand Opera by M. Renard, a new tenor, and the first appearance of M. Coelice, another tenor, at the Theatre Lyrique, as having been a brilliant success. The same journal announces that two veritable "cockneys" have been engaged here by M. Offenbach to "break French," for the diversion of the public of "Les Bouffes Parisiens"—that Mesdames Albani and Nantier-Didie are to form part of the company at the Italian Opera this winter,—and (as usual) that Madame Stoltz is so distracted by the magnificent engagements offered to her, that she has not decided whether she goes to America or to Montpelier. Among events which have just happened, or are "coming off," meetings are mentioned of the "Orphéons" at Bordeaux,—of the Swabian *Liedertafel* societies at Tübingen,—one at Revel, at which thousands of singers were, orientally, expected to congregate,—and (to pass to a distant quarter of the globe) an execution of Mendelssohn's "St. Paul" at Buenos Ayres. M. Vieuxtemps has been invited to take the lead in forming a "conservatory" or music school, at Constantinople.

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